

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

106th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 259

August 5, 1999, 10:15 a.m.
Page S-10274 Temp. Record

HOLBROOKE NOMINATION/United Nations Ambassador

SUBJECT: Nomination of Richard C. Holbrooke, of New York, to be the Representative of the United States to the United Nations.

ACTION: NOMINATION CONFIRMED, 81-16

SYNOPSIS: Richard C. Holbrooke was born April 24, 1941 in New York City, New York. He received a B.A. from Brown University in 1962. His employment history includes the following: 1962-1966, Foreign Service Officer in Vietnam; 1966, White House detailee; 1967-1969, wrote one of the volumes of the Pentagon Papers, served as a special assistant to Undersecretaries of State Katzenbach and Richardson, and was a member of the delegation to the Paris Peace Talks on Vietnam; 1980, Fellow, Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University; 1970-1972, Peace Corps Director, Morocco; 1972-1976 (on leave from the Foreign Service), Managing Editor of Foreign Policy; 1977-1981, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs; 1981-1985, co-founder and Vice President of Public Strategies (a consulting firm); 1985-1993, managing director at Lehman Brothers (which bought Public Strategies); 1993-1994, Ambassador to Germany; 1994-1995, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs; 1996-present, Vice Chairman, Credit Suisse First Boston; and 1997-present, Consultant (unpaid), Presidential Special Envoy to Cyprus.

Those favoring confirmation contended:

Richard Holbrooke is eminently qualified to be the Ambassador to the United Nations, and someone of his caliber is needed at this time in that post. His nomination was held up for more than a year due to an ethics investigation and to anonymous holds on totally unrelated matters. Thankfully, all objections have now been removed, and we can finally vote on his confirmation.

No one doubts Ambassador Holbrooke's strong background in foreign policy or his diplomatic skills. He has been in public service since the early 1960s, when he entered the Foreign Service. Since then, he has served in a wide variety of diplomatic

(See other side)

YEAS (81)				NAYS (16)		NOT VOTING (3)	
Republican (37 or 70%)		Democrats (44 or 100%)		Republicans (16 or 30%)	Democrats (0 or 0%)	Republicans (2)	Democrats (1)
Abraham	Hatch	Akaka	Johnson	Allard		Crapo- ²	Landrieu- ^{2AY}
Ashcroft	Jeffords	Baucus	Kennedy	Bunning		Helms- ²	
Bennett	Lugar	Bayh	Kerrey	Craig			
Bond	McCain	Biden	Kerry	Enzi			
Brownback	McConnell	Bingaman	Kohl	Gramm			
Burns	Murkowski	Boxer	Lautenberg	Gregg			
Campbell	Roth	Breaux	Leahy	Hutchinson			
Chafee	Santorum	Bryan	Levin	Hutchison			
Cochran	Shelby	Byrd	Lieberman	Inhofe			
Collins	Smith, Gordon	Cleland	Lincoln	Kyl			
Coverdell	Snowe	Conrad	Mikulski	Lott			
DeWine	Specter	Daschle	Moynihan	Mack			
Domenici	Stevens	Dodd	Murray	Nickles			
Fitzgerald	Thomas	Dorgan	Reed	Roberts			
Frist	Thompson	Durbin	Reid	Sessions			
Gorton	Thurmond	Edwards	Robb	Smith, Bob (I)			
Grams	Voinovich	Feingold	Rockefeller				
Grassley	Warner	Feinstein	Sarbanes				
Hagel		Graham	Schumer				
		Harkin	Torricelli				
		Hollings	Wellstone				
		Inouye	Wyden				

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

positions. In the Carter Administration, at the age of 37, he served as Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. At the time, he was the youngest person ever appointed as an assistant secretary. In 1993 he returned to government service as Ambassador to Germany, and in 1994 he became Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs. In that post he served as the chief negotiator for the Dayton Peace Accords, which brought peace to Bosnia and ended the wholesale slaughter in that country. Throughout his career he has been known for his very forceful personality. When necessary, he knows how to twist arms in order to advance the United States' objectives.

Someone of his caliber is definitely needed at the United Nations. That organization has severe management problems. It is inefficiently and corruptly run. The United States has made its payments of arrearages contingent on the United Nations enacting reforms; Ambassador Holbrooke is exactly the type of person who will be able to pressure it into making the needed reforms without excuses or delay. Perhaps even more importantly, he will be able to pressure the United Nations into speeding up its efforts to take over duties in Kosovo that are currently being performed by North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces. In that task he will have an advantage in that he has had a long professional relationship with the current NATO commander in Kosovo.

Ambassador Holbrooke should have been confirmed long ago. In prior years Senators always considered the post of United Nations Ambassador too important to delay the consideration of a nominee for it. In this case, though, several delays have occurred. First, anonymous allegations were made that he was guilty of financial improprieties in his official duties. Two separate investigations and extensive hearings did not prove any wrongdoing, but, in order to end the delays, he paid the few thousand dollars in dispute. We note for the record that Ambassador Holbrooke has served in lucrative private capacities as well as in public posts. When he has been asked to take a public post, he has had to take huge cuts in income in order to serve. Further, while in private service, he has often been called upon to conduct difficult negotiations, and he has done so without any remuneration. In our opinion, charging this dedicated public servant with financial improprieties, even though he has clearly made great financial sacrifices to serve his country, was disgraceful. Perhaps even more disturbing is that holds were placed on this nominee that had nothing to do with him. The appointment of a United Nations Ambassador should not have been delayed due to unrelated concerns.

Thankfully, all of those holds have finally been resolved. The nominee is clearly qualified. The Foreign Affairs Committee voted unanimously to report this nominee to the full Senate. We are confident that a strong majority of Senators will vote in favor of confirmation.

Those opposing confirmation contended:

As a preface to our remarks, we note that we never placed holds on this nomination. From the beginning, we have felt that Richard Holbrooke is a principled man, a dedicated public servant, and a very able and forceful negotiator. His nomination should have been brought before the full Senate for a vote some time ago. With that said, however, we have also always opposed confirmation of this nominee. The reason for our opposition is that we believe this very able ambassador will very ably lead the United States in the wrong direction. He is the chief architect of the United States' policy in Bosnia, which we believe has been a disaster. From 1992 through 1995 there was vast ethnic cleansing in Bosnia of Moslems because Moslem forces, unlike the other forces fighting in Bosnia, were poorly armed. Richard Holbrooke was instrumental in maintaining an arms embargo on the entire region, which prevented the Moslems from getting the weapons they needed to defend themselves. He then negotiated a peace settlement which essentially has resulted in the stationing of United States forces in Bosnia as buffers between the factions. Though the fiction is that a multiethnic state will be restored, each side's territory has just become more ethnically pure. The cost of this military operation for the United States has been enormous, and we strongly doubt it will ever achieve its objective of turning Bosnia into an American-style multiethnic democracy. Based on the record, appointing Richard Holbrooke as United Nations Ambassador could prove disastrous, because he has proven all too willing to commit United States forces to fighting expensive, dangerous, and ill-defined conflicts. Therefore, we firmly oppose confirmation.